

TESTIMONY on the Governor's Proposed Budget
Appropriations Committee
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Submitted By:

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Proud Member of Connecticut Local Administrators of Social Services, Inc. (CLASS)
And
The National Association of Social Workers, Connecticut Chapter

CLASS and NASW/CT are strongly opposed to the proposed funding cuts to the Care4Kids program in FY 18. We are also opposed to keeping the Care4Kids program closed to all but current TANF families for the next two years.

NASW/CT represents more than 2600 members across the state and works to promote and advance sound public policies and programs aimed at human need and improved quality of life.

CLASS is a statewide professional organization for municipal Social Services providers. Our current membership represents a total of 66 towns and cities across the state. Care4Kids helps families in 59 of these member towns. In our role as Municipal Social Service providers, we assist families who are struggling to meet their basic human needs such as food, shelter, energy assistance, access to health care to improve their quality of life. Taking away their access to quality, affordable childcare has long lasting negative impact on the child as well as the family as a whole. There are very real long-term consequences for the children and their families that will remain well after the fiscal year has passed.

Without CARE4Kids to help to pay for child care, some low income and working families will be forced to leave employment, or drop out of school. For others, the only choice will be to place their children in the care of non-licensed, non-family providers. In some cases, individuals who leave their work will also be giving up employer sponsored health insurance or ACCESS health insurance. **Funding the CARE4Kids Program is an investment in children, families and the economy.** A December 2016 CARE4Kids report shows that out of 169 Connecticut municipalities, all but six have families who utilize Care4Kids funding.

CLASS and NASWCT share a mutual goal to support working families who are struggling to find safe, quality care for their children so they can work or go to school.

We urge the Appropriations Committee to 1) not cut CARE4Kids funding and 2) re-open the program to new applicants who are former Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients and teen parents ages 18 and 19 who attend high school or equivalent.